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SUBJECT Present Conditions in Estonia

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EVALUATION OF SOURCE

EVALUATION OF CONTENT

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COMPLETELY RELIABLE	USUALLY RELIABLE	FAIRLY RELIABLE	NOT USUALLY RELIABLE	NOT RELIABLE	CANNOT BE JUDGED	CONFIRMED OTHER SOUR	PROBABLY TRUE	POSSIBLY TRUE	DOUBTFUL	PROBABLY FALSE	CANNOT BE JUDGED

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General Conditions

1. The Estonians feel more insecure at present than they did in 1940 and 1941. In 1944 the Russians arrested all members of the "Self Defense" organization; in 1945 all persons with German names were arrested; and in 1946 the Russians apprehended members of the families of all those who were arrested in 1940-'41. It is not now unusual for MGB officials (formerly NKVD) to enter an apartment without warning, announce that the special committee has found that the occupants are endangering the security of the State and are to be deported to Russia for a period of five years. Each of these Estonians is allowed to take with him sixty kilograms of personal property.
2. The "Red Terror" has been most in evidence in the districts where there is the greatest unrest among the natives. The populations of several villages near Tudulinna (ca. 8 kms. NE of Arvurme, some 5 kms. from the NE shore of Lake Peipus) have been deported almost to a man.
3. There is a camp for Estonian political prisoners in the town of Nõmme near Tallinn. These prisoners, who work in a quarry, were nearly all sentenced to four or five years of penal servitude. From time to time groups of them are sent to the interior of Russia.
4. The Estonians are much more vigilant than they were in 1940-'41, and the number of people apprehended has decreased. MGB agents are very active, however. It is said that many agents are employed as electricians and often install listening devices along with regular equipment in the buildings. Although there are Communist Party agents in the country villages, these are soon identified by the natives and are not considered a serious threat. MGB troops are stationed in Tallinn and Narva. In Tallinn there is a school for the Military and MGB.
5. According to reports, the confusion which exists in post-war Russia has made it difficult or impossible for the Russian Security Police to maintain the strict control exercised during the 1940-'41 occupation of Estonia. Furthermore, the large number of disorganized refugees arriving from Russia continuously help to create disorder.
6. Very few of the men deported by the Russians in 1940 and the following years have been heard from. Only a few of the women deportees have returned to Estonia or acknowledged the receipt of packages sent to them. Estonians who served in the German Army and were captured by the Russians are living in the most miserable conditions in Russian prison camps. A few invalids have succeeded in escaping to

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Estonia. One who arrived a short time ago from a prison camp in northern Karelia stated that 200 of his contingent of 600 Estonian soldiers had already died.

7. Among POW's who are doing slave labor in Estonia there are Vlassov-Russians (anti-Communists), Poles, Latvians, Lithuanians, Mongols from Inner Russia† and Estonians. There are reported to be many POW camps in Estonia. In the one at Narva there are 7,000 to 8,000 inmates and in the Narva-Jõesuu (Hungerburg) Camp there are 2,000, according to estimates.

* as received in original :

The Border Area

8. Soviet-Estonia is considerably reduced in size from what was the territory of the Estonian Republic. The informant describes the present Estonian-Russian border as beginning in the north on the shore of the Finnish Gulf about twelve kilometers east of the estuary of the Narva River. At present the river forms the line between Soviet-Estonia and the USSR. During the last Soviet elections even the Põltsa District was included in the Russian Pskov Region.
9. The Russians have manned all existing border guard stations along the Narva River and have erected new observation posts. There are 100 Russian soldiers guarding a seven-kilometer section of Narva-Jõesuu. Fishing and other vessels are under close surveillance and are concentrated in certain areas at night. The fishing port of Narva-Jõesuu and the concentration area in its vicinity have been surrounded by barbed wire and put under military guard. A major point of the Russian cordon is on the shores of Lake Vaikne, about seven kilometers from the old Estonian border (east of Narva).
10. Shore patrol for Saaremaa (Ösel Island) has been organized along the same pattern as those in the Narva area. All boats must be brought to central points and are placed under Russian guards for the night. The informant has observed, however, that not all parts of the island have continuous guard service, and the strength of the guarding force varies.

Military Information

11. The Estonian Corps has become almost entirely a labor force. The first to be transferred to the labor units were Estonians whom the Russians suspected of being disloyal, whose families had fled to Sweden or other places. No mention has been made of demobilization of these labor units. In some Red Army units demobilization has been completed down to the 36-year age group.
12. Units of the Estonian Corps who are still bearing arms consist entirely of Estonians born in Russia and of Russians. Such troops are located at Aegviidu and Klooga. There are artillery detachments in both areas, and in Klooga a large unit is in training. The tank force of the corps bears the name of Lembitu, an ancient Estonian national hero (although the corps consists chiefly of Mongolians and not one Estonian is included).
13. Although Russian forces in Estonia are reported to be great it is impossible to estimate their number. They are found throughout the country. The Soviet Army and Air Forces are known to have frequent practice in anti-aircraft defence activities around Tallinn. Airplanes can be seen pulling targets over the city at various altitudes.
14. The main harbor of Tallinn is a forbidden zone and is kept closely guarded. The former military port Minisadam is open and the informant has observed many small German warships, such as motor torpedo boats, in that part of the harbor.

Communist Party

15. The headquarters of the Communist Party in Estonia now occupies one of the main buildings in the center of Tallinn -- the former EKA House of Liberty Square. The building is under constant guard.

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16. According to reports, the Communist Party is constructing a large building in Peter's Square in Narva.
17. Soviet election results in Estonia were achieved by means of force and threats.

Communications

18. There has been a remarkable change in railway travel in Estonia recently. Hitherto a special certificate from the Military Command was needed by every traveler, but certificates of this kind are no longer necessary. Military men are constantly investigating the identification papers of travelers, but, since Russian passports have not yet been issued, almost every type of document is acceptable.
19. Since July 1946 Estonians have needed no special permit to visit Leningrad. From Estonians who traveled to that city the informant learned that Leningrad received less damage than claimed by the Russians.
20. On daily broadcasts from the Tallinn radio Estonians urge their relatives in Sweden to return home. According to the informant, this is a Soviet attempt to trick the refugees into returning to Estonia. It is rumored that the few who have returned disappeared soon after their arrival in Estonia.
21. The Soviet newspapers in Estonia describe conditions in Sweden as being very bad.

Industrial Items

22. It is reported that the industrial districts of Narva suffered very little war damage. Some parts of the large Kreenholm Factory were destroyed by fire, but cloth is again being produced, though with a very small number of employees. Plants of the Narva Cloth Manufacturing Co. and the Narva Linen Co. have not been rebuilt since the war.
23. During a trip through the Estonian shale oil industry area the informant observed Russian activities. The Germans built a new factory in Ahtme during their occupation but did not have time to get it into production. Although it remained undamaged throughout the war, the Russians have not yet started operations there. New oil shale mines are being developed near Jõhvi, reportedly for the oil plant at Ahtme. In order to provide land for the development of these mines, farmers are being moved out of this area. They must be evacuated by May 1947.
24. Along the entire coast of Virumaa Russian specialists are drilling and prospecting for new minerals. Drilling is being done in the region along Narva Bay and the Gulf of Finland -- at Toila, ca. 35 kms. west of Narva; Türsamäe, ca. 25 km. west of Narva; Vaivara, ca. 4 km. south of Türsamäe; Utria, ca. 18 km. west of Narva; and on the shore of Aa, ca. 55 km. west of Narva near the villages Põite and Pirtse.
25. The Türsamäe Shale Oil Plant, which belonged to a Swedish company, was heavily damaged during the war. It is now being repaired and rebuilt by the Russians.
26. The Germans built a large shale oil plant at Kiviõli, about 25 km. west of Jõhvi. It has not yet been utilized by the Russians although it was not damaged during the war. The people who live near by think that the Russians do not have enough engineers to operate the plant and are thinking of destroying it.
27. The retreating Germans set fire (in 1944) to the shale oil mines at Kiviõli; Kukruse, ca. 5 km. NW of Jõhvi; and Kohtla-Järve. By the time the Russians had brought the fires, which had burned a long time, under control, the mines were flooded by water. Some of the mines are still under water and development is being hindered by the lack of Diesel pumps. The Kohtla-Järve shale oil factory is now in full production, however. About the same number of people are being employed here as there were during the operation by the Estonians.
28. There is a marked shortage of labor in the shale oil industry as well as in the mines. This is reported to be caused by the bad situation in regard to food in this area. Prisoners are being employed in the mines.

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